A Customary for the Bishop's Visitation

Prioritizing One Worship Time

When congregations have more than one Sunday liturgy, we remember that we are still one body worshipping at two or more times on the day rather than two or more separate groups who use the same worship space. When possible, I would like to stress this reality by having everyone gathered at one main service. This is especially significant when my visit includes rites of initiation.

I realize that for our larger congregations this will not be possible. Please be in contact with me if more than one liturgy is desired on the Sunday of my visit.

Baptism

- Epiphany, Easter, The Day of Pentecost, and All Saints' Day should be the primary focus for the baptismal rite. However, if there is a good reason for baptism to be part of the other initiation rites during my visit, please notify Canon Harris several weeks in advance. (Baptisms should not be scheduled during Lent.)
- Make sure that the parents and godparents at baptism have rehearsed their answers.
- I will be the celebrant and will preside at baptism. You may baptize with water and I will then seal the newly baptized with chrism. If you did not obtain chrism during the clergy day in Lent, let Canon Harris know and I can bring some.
- We can both sign the certificate.
- If we baptize and I seal an adult, that person is not normally then presented for confirmation later in the service. Instead, I will lay hands on the person in the context of baptism, with the "Defend, O Lord, your servant . . ." prayer. If this decision creates a challenge, please confer with me well in advance.

Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation

- In most but not all cases, when a candidate has been previously confirmed in a different mainline Christian tradition, I will receive the candidate. However,

any questions or anomalies about the candidate's status and desire should be communicated to Canon Harris.

- For the Prayer(s) for the Candidate(s) the Prayer Book offers that the prayers on 305-306 ***may*** be used. This is an acceptable option if you prefer, but the bishop simply offering the prayer on 418 as prescribed is an appropriate choice
- By way of reminder, to become an ordinary member of an Episcopal parish, one's baptism need only be recorded in the register of the Episcopal congregation. Recognizing a new member is not an act of the bishop. If you desire to recognize a new member of your parish, you may certainly do so at any time, unless there is good reason to include it during my visitation.

Liturgical Arrangements

- I will stand for confirmation, reception and reaffirmation. Please have each person who is being initiated come and stand in front of me in turn.
- It is most appropriate for people to be confirmed, etc. to use their first name given at baptism. I will, of course, use whatever version of the name that person prefers.
- If the candidate has pronoun preferences, the situation and the preferred pronouns need to be discussed with Canon Harris and the bishop prior to the service.
- Often candidates are not well prepared to offer their audible response to the questions in the liturgy. Please make sure that those being confirmed have rehearsed their answers and are prepared to offer them aloud.
- The newly confirmed persons will return to their pews after the Peace.

Other Service Details

- Please email a draft of the service bulletin to Canon Jonathan Harris jharris@dioswva.org (cc: Kristen Hester kkhester@dioswva.org) **2 weeks prior to the visitation.**
- If the service includes confirmation, the liturgical color is traditionally red, but may remain the color of the season as well. If there is no confirmation, please plan to use the liturgical color appointed for that Sunday. However, during Advent, Lent, and Eastertide, the color will be the color of the season, even if there are confirmations.
- Do not forget to have the senior warden present "Voluntary Proportionate Giving" Pledge during the offertory before the bishop offers the offertory sentence.

- Announce that the undesignated offering will be given to the Bishop's Discretionary fund.
- Please provide a glass or bottle of water on or near the Bishop's chair.
- If you plan to livestream or record the service please inform Canon Harris so that the bishop can be prepared for the necessary technical instructions.

Note on Deacons

The deacon that visits with me (if there is one) will do all of the pieces of the liturgy assigned to him/her. This includes reading the Gospel, inviting to confession, setting the Table, and pronouncing the dismissal. The deacon could also introduce and/or lead the Prayers of the People if a lay person were not already assigned.

The deacon will also assist the Bishop in the liturgy as the occasion requires. Please make sure there is a designated seat(s) for the deacon.

Other Matters

- Please leave the 15 minutes prior to the service unscheduled so that the Bishop may prepare for worship. In addition, if there are confirmands, schedule a 15-20 minute period for me to meet with them. Canon Harris will work with you to plan the shape and schedule of the Bishop's time with you.
- Please have the Parish Register(s) and Service Register available for the Bishop's examination and signature.
- Provide ample time for bishop to sign confirmation certificates and, if appropriate, confirmands' Prayer Books. This is especially important if they are going to be presented during worship.
- Please mail the Confirmation reporting form to Evans House following the service.